NATARAJAN: You speak Tamil, I will speak ... (*Interruptions*)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Q.No. 184.

Findings of Expert Committee on the Nickle content in Indian Chocolates

*184. SHRIMATI ILA PANDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi High Court has directed the Government of India to furnish the findings of the Expert Committee on the Nickle content in Indian chocolates;

(b) whether the Expert Committee has given its report and, if so, what are its findings; and

(c) what corrective measures Government propose to take against such hazards?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The expert groups chaired by DG, ICMR and Director, National Institute of Occupational Health have given their report. The main findings are:

— the values of Nickel content in Indian Chocolates are comparable to internationally reported values.

— there is no need to fix any limit for Nickel content in normal food articles as there is no cause for concern for Nickel toxicity through oral ingestion of such food.

— limits for Nickel content are important in case of foods where Nickel is used for processing, to ensure Good Manufacturing Practices by the Industry.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should have brought some chocolates for the Members of Parliament. Then at least they could know whether you are right or wrong.

SHRIMATI ILA PANDA: Madam Deputy Chairman, may I know from the hon. Minister in detail about the internationally reported value of nickel content in the chocolates manufactured in India? Would the Minister lay a copy of the report of the expert group on the Table of the House?

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Madam, as per the information that we have collected, there is no limit on nickel content in food, as has been recommended by CODEX, that is the international body of WHO/FAO and in countries like U.K ., U.S.A. EEC and Canada, there is no limit on nickel/ content, as prescribed by the Food Control Authority.

SHRIMATI ILA PANDA: Madam, may I know from the hon. Minister whether the Indian chocolate manufacturers are using the cheap hydrogenated oil instead of coco-butter and whether the Minister is aware of the fact that there is no health hazard from the nickel content in chocolates?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Are they using hydrogenated oil or coco butter?

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Madam, they are using coco in chocolates.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, they are using coco-butter. That is the difference. That is why the lady can know and the gentleman can't about food matters.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: There is no such report that this material is being used in chocolates. (*Interruptions*) There is no report of this material being used in chocolates.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let me ask another lady. Renuka Chowdhury, what is your opinion about coco-butter and nickel content?

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, coco-butter is excellent. (*Interruptions*) I will investigate about the chocolates if the Minister is kind enough to forward some of them to me.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let is come through the Chair.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: That is right. First it goes to the Business Advisory Committee and then it comes to you.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Madam, when a complaint like this was raised, has the Minister asked the concerned authority to find out the upper limit of the nickel content which is hazardous to human health? If so, have they checked it and found that it is hazardous? I would also like to know whether the Government will issue directions to the chocolate manufacturers that they will print this thing on the chocolate itself that so much percentage of nickel content will be hazardous to health.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Madam, the daily intake of nickel content varies widely depending on the dietary habits. This range is from 100 mg to 8 mg per day. As regards details, there are two public interest litigations filed in the Delhi High Court and the Lucknow Bench of Allahabad High Court and the Government have set up two Committees to go into the details-one under the chairmanship of the Director-General of ICMR and the other under the Chairmanship of the Director, National Institute of Occupational Health—to find out details of the nickel content in chocolates.

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY: I think the Minister could not comprehend what I was asking. I am asking about the safety limits. For instance, if a weak person takes Vitamin A in excess quantities, then it settles down in his liver and is detrimental to his health. How much percentage of nickel content can a human body tolerate? The Minister has to check this. There are certain communities which have intolerance towards a particular thing. For instance, intolerance of lactose. The whole American community cannot tolerate lactose. So they take substitutes for health and digestion. We have to check this. In our country, there was a certain intolerance of particular ingredients. It is a genetic thing. So I am asking this. It is true and some of us can't take it. Is the Minister aware of these things?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Kindly find out as to how much tolerance is there?

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Madam, we are answering the question of the sweet hon. lady Member of Parliament about the sweet things in life and the increase in sweet intake causing harm to the body. Madam, you were right in saying that we should have brought some chocolates for the hon. Members. But I can assure that it has been made abundantly clear that the chocolates manufactured in India are comparable to any chocolates in the world and they are not injurious to health.

The nickel content naturally goes in with the food that we take daily whether it is processed food or cooked food. Whatever the amount of food that we take, it is not injurious to health.

(Interruptions)

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now, I would like the hon. Minister to give an assurance to the House that the nickel content in chocolates will not exceed the prescribed limit. That is all.

(Interruptions)

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Madam, may I bring this fact to the notice of the hon. Member that nickel itself is not toxic? A few expert committees have examined this aspect in detail, not common people.

SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: We are not talking about the nickel content in the air. We are talking about the nickel content in food which is injurious to health.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Madma, is it the position of the Minister

that nickel is not injurious to health? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: The hon. Member has not understood me properly. Try to understand what I am saying. (*Interruptions*).... I said the nickel content in the food and not nickel itself.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Sugar also is injurious to health.

Guidelines Issued by Chief Election Commissioner to N.E. State

185. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chief Election Commissioner has issued some guidelines to the N.E. States on the rolls Revision issue and to delete the foreigner's names from the draft electoral rolls;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is a proposal with the Government to issue Identity Card to the people in the N.E. Region (bordering States of Bangladesh) to check infiltration; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS: (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) to (d) A *statement* is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMEET

(a) and (b) In August 1992, the Election Commission of India issued directions to all the States/Union Territories (except Jammu & Kashmir) with regard to intensive revision of Electoral Rolls. These directions, *inter-alia* broadly provide for identification of areas having substantial presence of foreign nationals and application of Special Enumeration Procedure for these areas by the concerned State Governments. Subsequently, the Commission issued Special Revised Instructions to the Government of Assam in May 1993 for intensive revision of Electoral Rolls in the State of Assam.

(c) and (d) The Government have decided to introduce a Scheme of Identity Cards in certain infiltration-prone border areas of the country including the States of Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura and West Bengal in the North East. The concerned State Governments have been requested to complete the ground-work urgently so that distribution of Identity Cards may start immediately.

SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Madam, the reply given by the hon. Minister is no answer to the question put by me. I wanted to know specifically as to whether there were directives from the Chief Election Commissioner regarding the revision of electoral rolls. Now, while it is admitted that certain directives were issued in connection with the revision of electoral rolls and special revised instructions were also given to the Government of Assam regarding the revision of electoral rolls, I wanted to know specifically the details of the directors. No details of the directions so issued in connection with the revision of electoral rolls have been supplied. Madam, you know very well that due to the revision of electoral rolls in Assam, the political atmosphere has become very hot. There are allegations that a large number of names of genuine Indian citizens have been left out. On the other hand, there are counter—allegations that a large number of names of foreigners have found place in the rolls.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let him answer.

SHRI P.M. SAYEED: Madam, the hon. Member is partially correct because the directives of the Election Commission, which I referred to in the main statement, run into two pages. Therefore, I would like to place it on the Table of the House for the benefit of the House and also the Member. The main question which he has asked is with regard to the directions. They are there. I have already conceded that. As has been mentioned by him, they have created a